

# West Gazette

The  
Student Newspaper  
of Hazelwood West  
High School

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**PWS**  
**for NEWS**

What is El Niño? Is it a party, an island, a tropical storm, or just an evil little man who likes to play with our weather. El Niño is actually a weather event? It is simply "the periodic super-heating of ocean water off the coast of South America." This phenomenon has been known for hundreds of years and was named after Jesus, 'the little boy', by a Peruvian fisherman, because it usually peaks around Christmas time.

How does this affect us? According to meteorologist Mark Nichols, El Niño has been known to cause droughts, floods, and unseasonable temperatures. The prediction for the U.S. this year is heavy rainfall, which can cause severe flooding and the possibility of snow storms.

Scientists are not sure if El Niño is a result of global warming. There have been 25 El Niños since the early 1980s and they have been getting gradually stronger. Some experts say that this is caused by a slight increase in global temperatures. Others see no connection. All that is certain is that El Niño has the potential for climatic chaos."

**BY Kwajelyn Jackson**

A plane ride, a hotel room, and national monuments.

These are all things that the 38 people in Close Up will be experiencing between February 22-28.

The cost of this trip is around \$1,000. To raise this money, they have done everything from selling pizzas and pies, to selling gold cards, to asking companies to sponsor an individual.

After the plane touches down, the students are busy nonstop. They have a detailed schedule for every day of the week. There are more than 2,100 meetings with members of Congress arranged each year for Close Up students from around the country.

One thing different is that they will be stopping in Williamsburg. This historical town is one of the things Natalie Karn is looking forward to. "I've heard that it is a really fun place to see," said Natalie.

**BY Kelly O'Heron**

Senior Alicia Bell and junior Dave McCrary earned musical honors at the All State Band competition. Dave earned second chair alto saxophone in All-State Jazz Band. Alicia received All-State honorable mention for her flute performance.

**BY Kelly O'Heron**

The Pridettes participated in both the dance and novelty divisions of the Lindbergh Competition on December 6. They received first place in dance for their routine "Scat Man." The dancers got second place and Most Memorable Performance for their novelty routine, "Eat It."

The Varsity Dance Team will go on to State Competition in Kansas City from February 27 until March 1.

**BY Kwajelyn Jackson**

The Fall West Gazette will make history by displaying its fifth and final issue on the World Wide Web. Due to rising printing costs, this will be the only place for viewing the issue. Despite the fact that not all students will be able to read it, this last issue will be longer and complete with pictures of the staff who has served West this fall. The address is [www.hazelwood.k12.mo.us/~ssmith01](http://www.hazelwood.k12.mo.us/~ssmith01). This issue will be available January 16, 1998.

**BY Dina Starr**

## On-Stage Leaders Plan Performances To Bring Laughs, Tears to Audiences

Story by  
**BECKY DALL**

**L**aughing and crying will fill the air for five nights in a row in the auditorium for the first time in West history.

Seniors Jo Ann Croghan, Cathie Degler, Darlene Saindon, Clayton Robbins, Megan Favazza, and Vince Chandler will all be directing their own one acts. Try-outs were held on December 8 and 10.

Jo Ann's play is about a girl who says "Goodbye to the Clown". The clown always seems to be getting her into trouble. The girl doesn't realize the clown is imaginary, so she blames everything on him. "It is hilarious," said Jo Ann.

"An Actor's Nightmare" is being directed by Cathie. It's about a guy in street clothes who stumbles onto the stage where a play is being performed. He is forced to play a role that he knows nothing about.

Darlene's play, "Take Five", is a comedy about a show being performed and going totally

wrong.

Anyone facing oppression, will identify with Clayton's play "Softy". "It's about people doing the right thing," said Clayton.

Megan's play, "I Remember You", is about two people who grew up together and went their separate ways. Thirty years later their paths cross and the romance they once had is reignited.

"The Handicapper General" is being directed by Vince. It is set in the future and is about how the government puts devices on people to stop them from becoming too strong.

Three one acts will be performed on each night in the auditorium on February 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The cost will be \$3 for one night and \$5 for two nights.



**STUDENTS TAKE CONTROL...** Clockwise from left One Act directors seniors Clayton Robbins, Darlene Saindon, Jo Ann Croghan, Vince Chandler, Megan Favazza, and Cathie Degler. Photo by SHARA PUCKETT

## West Phones Home

Story by  
**JO ANN CROGHAN**

**H**azelwood West is reaching out to touch someone with the new phone system.

The new phones have brought many changes. Every phone number has changed. All of the phones in the district will eventually share the same exchange numbers, 953. New important numbers at West include the switchboard, 953-5800, and the attendance number, 953-5840.

Not only are the phone numbers different, but even the way the phones are answered has changed. For example, if you are sick and your mom or dad calls in, they will no longer talk to the attendance lady. They'll have to leave a message on voice mail. During the day the attendance people will check the voice mail and mark you excused. Another change is if you

call any school number that is busy, you'll no longer get the annoying busy signal. You'll go directly to that person's voice mail.

One of the advantages of the new phone system is that when students are absent, all they may have to do is call their teachers' voice mail and listen for their assignments. This is if the teachers choose to do this and update it daily. After the student is done listening he or she could leave a message. Teachers then use their own security code to check on their messages and get back to the student if necessary.

Another ideal usage of the phone system could be when a student is absent for a long period of time, the teacher could call this student at home and put him or her on speaker phone. This way, students could still participate and learn with their classmates.

However, students cannot call into the classrooms. The students will reach the voice mail system, not any particular phone. That is the key in this school's phone system.

All of these options, are just that—options. The teachers do not have to do any of these suggested uses of the phones. Each will decide how to use the system to benefit students.

Another goal of the district is to be hooked up to the internet from every classroom to help students apply their learning to the world. This phone system, if used properly, can benefit everyone.

Most of the phones do not have a direct line in, although one could call out although department chairs and certain other rooms do.

With the new phone system, the district and the school are taking a big leap into the future. With internet access in every room, students will have increased opportunities for cutting edge activities.



### NEW PHONE SYSTEM...

Technology connects West to the future and provides a more efficient means of communication between staff, students, and parents. Photo by **JASON MYERS**

### New Station Coming

## Change To Benefit All

Story by  
**STEPHANIE CLARKIN**

**B**ull dozers, piles of dirt, and lots of construction is what has been going on across Howdershell for the last month or so. Previously, Amoco served West with gas and a car wash. Just recently, Amoco has decided to renovate its establishment. For Amoco's customers' convenience a new car wash and food mart will be built. Amoco formerly owned the whole lot but it has been divided into two lots. The division may bring another attraction to Hazelwood West students: two golden arches. According to the code administrator of the city of Hazelwood, Pat McShee, the McDonalds is definite. The opening is set for the spring of 1998. "The Brown Campus site will be closing because it caters to the business and they can't support the dinner rush as well as the housing communities can," Mr. McShee said.

The owner-operator for the Brown Campus site, Mr. Ron Townsend said he had not heard anything from the McDonald's corporation about the closing. He also said the proposals for the new McDonalds' site has been approved by the code administrator of Hazelwood but is not final until the contract for the land is passed.

"It is a long process," said Mr. Townsend. "Right now it is not final and it is possible that there might not be a McDonalds built because the contract has not yet been signed."

## Holiday Happiness Abounds

Story by  
**DINA STARR**

**O**n the first day of Christmas, the holiday gift-giving begins. But for many, the season starts much sooner.

Students and staff alike started in November to plan, prepare, and participate in the holiday spirit.

The Carolers, Concert Choir, and Girl's Choirs caroled for listeners' enjoyment and to benefit charitable causes. Places they visited included Union Station, Northwest Plaza, and the airport. Proceeds from contributions go to the St. Louis Christmas Caroleers Association. This organization benefits other groups like Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Other Fine Art activities are concerts of the junior and senior high bands,

orchestras, and choirs performing seasonal music.

The Advanced Keyboarding class is incorporating the holiday spirit as part of the curriculum. These students offered letters from Santa to relatives and friends of the faculty. Office Technology made mailing labels to send out holiday cards.

National Honor Society sponsored a canned food drive, collecting hundreds of cans for needy people. Student Council encouraged all students to get involved by decorating their first hours' doors.

The Food and Nutrition class host a tea and cookie time for staff. Students prepare the refreshments, decorate in a seasonal atmosphere, and practice hosting skills learned in class.

Faculty was also making holiday plans. The clerical staff participates in a district dinner for all involved in the Hazelwood Association of Educational Office Personnel. This evening features holiday themes, a speaker, and food. This year, a gift exchange is being replaced by donations to "Room at the Inn", a community based program providing emergency shelter to homeless families.

The librarians also help brighten lives during this merry time. Besides decorating, they work hard to have holiday books ready for students' convenience and often provide bookmarks with candy.

Here at West, holiday cheer is abundant. From gift giving to receiving, this holiday season is fully celebrated.



# Opinions

Edited by  
JOSH RENAUD

## Variety Is In For Winter Holiday Season

Story by  
KWAJELYN JACKSON

The weather outside is frightful, and inside the building it is...well, frightful. How can we be expected to dress for a snowstorm when it is 105 degrees in the building?

If there is one thing worth hating, it is gambling with your health. For example, a dress without a leg covering of some sort is not a risk worth taking, unless you get a run, heaven forbid.

The trend for females that seems to be spreading like a virus is a stylish sweater vest over a crisp white blouse. Though it is cute as can be, it is getting a little bit boring. If all of your friends, some of your enemies, and even your mother all have the same sweater vest as you, try not to wear it three times a week.

We may as well get uniforms if we are all going to look identical. Remember that variety is the spice of life. Try a little spice; you might like it.

Since it is basketball season, let's make a statement on the Nike crisis. Fellows, could someone explain why on earth you would pay \$180 or more on a pair of shoes that you plan to slowly destroy every day on the basketball court? And why does every pair have to be a fashion monstrosity? Thick plastic, neon colors, reflective tape, and hideous bubbles cover every inch of the most popular brands. They promise amazing height on your jumper, terrific traction for your crossover, and comfort. But do you believe them?

The most vital item in your closet this time of year should be your winter coat. Some people are sporting luscious leather, in new colors and the basics—black and brown.

Others are warming up in fabulous furs, fake of course, and even those can come in bright colors that stand out.

The fluffy down jackets that line the hallways seem to be favorites, as well. These come in every color imaginable, from conservative navy blue to lime green. A hot color could be all you need to warm up this winter.

Go on, and show that little El Niño that he's not gonna stifle your creativity.



Photo by  
CLAYTON ROBBINS

## Pledge Proposal Promotes Patriotism

Story by  
D.J. HENRICHS and JOSH RENAUD

It seems strange that from kindergarten on, we said the pledge of allegiance every day for years. Now in high school, we only find time to show dedication to our country on Monday mornings, with a below-average recording of our national anthem.

We decided to find out what West students knew and felt about the pledge of allegiance. Our survey revealed that a surprisingly large number of students could not say the pledge. "I kind of feel bad that I don't remember it, after saying it all through grade school," said senior Ron Moore, after trying to recite the pledge.

We then asked students what they thought about the fact that we do not say the pledge of allegiance at West. "It doesn't matter," said eighth grader Crystal Gerling. Her response was similar to what we heard from most students.

Several administrators at West

and at the Hazelwood School District Central Office questioned the idea of beginning to say the pledge of allegiance again. Most of them were quick to add that they loved the idea personally, and they were all for patriotism. "But, it may be more trouble than it's worth," said superintendent Dr. Larry Humphries.

It is scary to think that a majority of students do not care about having respect for our country. We should have a sense of pride in our country, because it is the best in the world. School officials need to stop being so cautious and try being a little bold, by standing up for what is right.

Many students said they found listening to the national anthem every week quite boring. "Personally, I think listening to the anthem is a waste of class time," said sophomore Rick Price.

So there would seem to be two



I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE...Students in Mrs. Cook's 2nd grade class at Armstrong Elementary honor their country with their hands over their hearts. Photo by CHRIS BURNLEY

problems: A lack of respect for our country, and a feeling of boredom with listening to the national anthem. We believe there is a way to solve both of these problems.

The administration should alternate between playing the national anthem and saying the pledge of allegiance. "I would like that," said senior Gretchen Soderberg, "because it's shorter and you get to participate."

Building principal Mr. Steve Jurkins expressed interest in the idea. "I'm very patriotic," he said, "and I'd be all for it."

The administration should also turn over the job of doing an-

nouncements to students. By doing this, students could find creative ways to pay respect to our country. Instead of complaining about hokey anthem recordings, we could find more exciting ways to do it ourselves.

Senior John Luecke liked the idea. "I always like things that have to do with our country that connect to me," he said.

The pledge of allegiance is a way we can express our loyalty to the United States of America. It has been such a long time since we have said it in school, and the idea of doing it again seems pretty exciting. Why not try it?

## Classic Christmas Movies Captivate

Story by  
ADAM EDWARDS

George Bailey, Kevin McAllister, Bob Cratchet, Tiny Tim, and the Griswald family. These names come from the familiar movies of the season. Take a look at the best Christmas movies available.

"It's A Wonderful Life," starring James Stewart as George Bailey, is a familiar classic about a man who wishes he had never been born. His wish is granted and an angel, Clarence, comes to show him how much he is really needed in life.

Another classic, "The Bishop's Wife," starring Cary Grant, is about a priest who asks God to send help. An angel named Dudley is sent to help the bishop but ends up falling in love with his wife.

One of the most renowned Christmas movies of all time is "A Christmas Carol." Ebenezer Scrooge is a cheap, stingy man with a cold heart. On Christmas Eve he is visited by his old, de-

parted partner Jacob Marley, who warns him that three spirits will visit him before the night is over. The spirits show Scrooge the man he once was, the man he has become, as well as the people he is affecting, including his employee Bob Cratchet and a crippled little boy named Tiny Tim.

Another Christmas classic to remember is "Miracle On 34th Street." Six-year-old Susan does not believe in Santa Claus because her mother told her it's not true. Yet, when Susan meets a department store Santa who claims to be real, hope arises in her heart. It's not long before all of New York City begins to believe.

The incredible McCauley Culkin stars as Kevin McAllister in "Home Alone." Accidentally left alone for Christmas, Kevin takes being by himself to a new dimension. He handles himself with humor and adventure.

It's Christmas time for the Griswalds in "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation." Clark Griswald (Chevy Chase) has

planned a fun-filled, old-fashioned family Christmas. However, Clark is a disaster waiting to happen. There are 25,000 lights on the house, an exploding turkey inside, and a SWAT team taking battle stations outside. This hilarious comedy will have you rolling.

Tim Allen stars in "The Santa Clause." This is a movie about one man's adventure to fill the big man's shoes. After Santa Claus falls from the roof to his death, Tim Allen finds a business card in Santa's pocket that tells him to get into the sleigh. Little does he know, but it will take him for the ride of his life as he slowly becomes the real Santa Claus.

The cartoon holiday classic, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," captures our hearts as the Grinch learns the true meaning of Christmas is not necessarily having material possessions.

Finally, "The Christmas Story" weaves a tale about a boy who wants a BB gun for Christmas. This movie is told from his perspective and is a must-see.

This Christmas season, spend time with family and loved ones by watching the Christmas movies that continue to thrill hearts and make our holidays so special. "Yule" love them!



Art by KATIE KOCH

## Student Leadership Requires Effort

Story by  
JOSH RENAUD

This year has been full of fantastic fun, all because of a few key groups of students. Student Council members, Pep Club officers, and class officers have worked throughout the year to pro-

vide us with exciting activities.

These groups promote many activities throughout the year. For instance, Student Council plans much of what goes on during Homecoming. They also man the concession stand at football games, sponsor the holiday classroom door decorating contest, and they put up the Christmas tree in the Commons.

Pep Club officers plan all the senior and junior high pep assemblies, organize the Turnabout dance, and have been involved with the senior breakfasts. This year, Pep Club officers were also a major part of the Bonfire.

The class officers are involved with decorating for Spirit Week and putting together Homecoming floats for their classes. Junior and Senior Class officers have additional responsibilities such as Prom and choosing senior items.

Despite all the good things these groups do, there are some problems. One of those problems is the way class officers operate. According to some sponsors, some

class officers never show up for meetings and never get involved in activities.

"I think that's a problem," said Senior Class and Pep Club sponsor Mrs. Andrea Taylor. "We elect class officers, but give them no duties. Then they become seniors, and there is work to do, but they've been conditioned that there's nothing to do."

Another problem for these groups has been the elimination of club days. The sponsors of these organizations find it difficult to schedule meetings, which are very important for planning their activities.

"Typically, class officers are athletes or are in National Honor Society or other things. Sometimes they are in other organizations that meet during zero hour, and that causes problems. During May and April, the only way to plan Prom is to pull the Junior Class officers out of class, and that's not good," said Junior Class sponsor Mrs. Patti Richey.

To solve the problem of

elected students who don't participate, some sort of penalty is needed. Sponsors need to have a little more authority in getting students who were elected to office to live up to their responsibility.

Club days should be held again, as they were in the past, once a month. These groups are very important to the student body. Without them, many of our favorite activities could not get off the ground and because of that, every effort should be made to support them.

"We have to have club days," said Mrs. Taylor. "They were a very important part of our school's activity system and they promoted good things for the school. When we can't sit down and find ways to improve the school, it stagnates!"

In the end, though, Student Council members, class officers, and Pep Club officers deserve a lot of credit. To do a good job takes a lot of effort, and those students get little recognition. Thanks a lot, guys!

## West Gazette

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# Page 3 Features

## Christmas Crossword

Edited by  
DAVE McGRAIL

CHRISTMAS 97

## STAR Signs

By  
STEPHANIE CLARKIN

**SAGITTARIUS-NOV 23-DEC 22-** Watch out for feeling under the weather. Until you feel well remember this quote: "To wish to be well is a part of becoming well." Seneca.

**CAPRICORN-DEC 23- JAN 20-** "Problems are only opportunities in work clothes." Henry J. Kaiser. Remember this when you struggle with a new subject. If you keep working at it, you may find it's what you were meant to do.

**AQUARIUS-JAN 21-FEB 19 -** "Don't wait for your ship to come; swim out to it." Anonymous. This is probably the right way to go regarding that secret crush.

**PISCES-FEB 20-MAR 20-** This month, life will have its ups and downs, and you will feel like your life is a long ride on the Screaming Eagle. To help you adjust remember: "You win some, you lose some, and some get rained out but you gotta suit up for them all." J. Askenberg.

**ARIES-MAR 21-APR 20 -** You may find yourself recovering from a breakup or disappointment. It won't be easy but maybe these words will ease your pain: "What does not destroy me, makes me strong." Friedrich Nietzsche.

**TAURUS-APR 21-MAY 21-** You will find yourself dwelling on that special someone who left you with a broken heart. Read this and keep it in mind: "When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us." Helen Keller.

**GEMINI-MAY 22-JUN 21 -** Oh no! You forgot to do that report that's due tomorrow. Don't say, I guess I'll just get a zero, instead think of the phrase: "Better late than never." Livy.

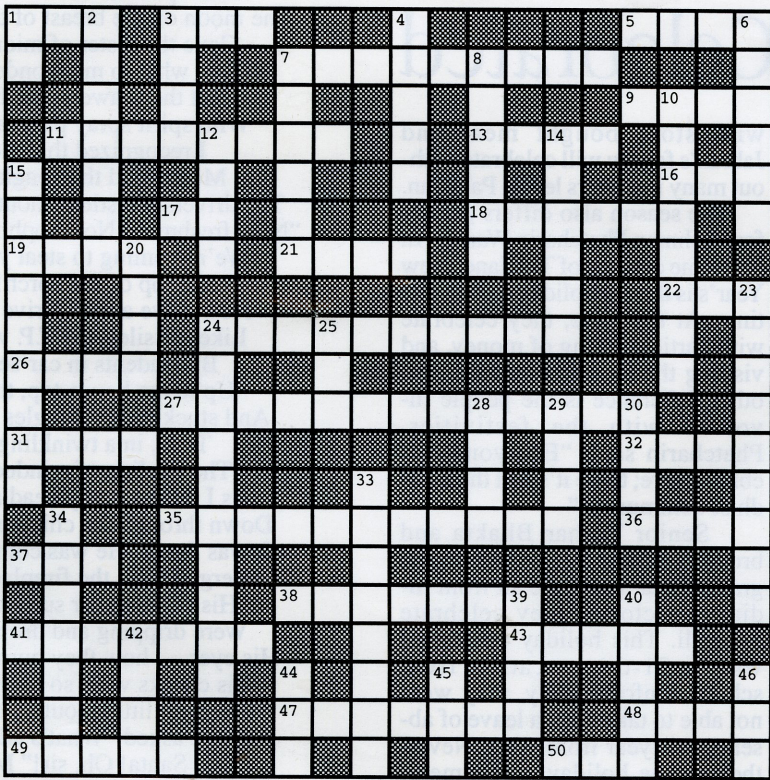
**CANCER-JUN 22-JUL 23-** "Learn to sweat the small stuff." Dr. Kenneth Greenspan. This may be a good idea since you will find a lot going wrong this month.

**LEO-JUL 24-AUG 2 -** Everything is going good. But do take advantage of it. "Don't hurry, don't worry. You're only here for a short visit. So be sure to stop and smell the flowers." Walter Hagen.

**VIRGO-AUG 24-SEP 23** A first impression will help you reach that long awaited goal. So remember: "Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless." -Mother Theresa.

**LIBRA-SEP 24-OCT 23 -** While feeling down, you may try to find happiness by looking for a new companion or by buying that new sweater and it just isn't working. This may be the solution to your unhappiness: "Joy is not in things; it is in us." Richard Wagner.

**SCORPIO-OCT 24-NOV 22 -** You find yourself in a sticky situation. Do you do what is right or do you do what you want and suffer the consequences? To help you, contemplate this: "Nothing is more difficult and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide." Napoleon I.



Across

- Alternative to turkey for Christmas dinner
- What you'll get if you eat too much
- It plays "pa-rum-pum-pum."
- Gift often given, but not often eaten.
- What you do to gifts!
- Two weeks off from school.
- You chop down this kind of tree.
- December 24 is Christmas
- Oh, come all ye faithful.
- Decorations for houses.
- The first, the angel did say...
- Log put on the hearth on Christmas Eve.
- Egg
- Welcomed visitor on Christmas!
- Oh all ye faithful.
- the Lord is come!
- Opposite of "naughty"
- Not a creature was stirring, not a mouse.
- These ring. Are you listening?
- Royal visitor to the manger.
- Leave milk in this for Santa.
- Strung on your tree.
- Chocolate chip, sugar, or oatmeal.
- Santa!
- Put in windows or used in a Christmas procession.
- You'll get this if you're bad.
- Mr. Koontz' favorite group.
- Oh little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee

Down

- Santa's exclamation
- Happened on 34th street
- Deck the halls by singing \_\_\_ la la la...
- Silent
- Where the shepherds found Jesus lying.
- Snowman's name.
- Christmas songs.
- Exchanged at Christmas
- Decorated with lights and ornaments
- we have heard on high.
- Red and white striped sweet.
- What the world needs now...
- Happy Christmas to all and to all a
- that stay on my nose and eyelashes...
- Limited store for kids.
- Peace on earth, good to men.
- Team that needs a win for Christmas.
- the halls with boughs of holly.
- Christmas activity requiring money or credit cards.
- Reindeer leader
- First page of the Gazette contains this
- Sleep in heavenly
- Fruit having nothing whatsoever to do with Christmas!
- Roads get this way. Don't slip!
- Jolly St. Nicholas.
- And to a good night!

## Holiday Traditions Stay The Same

Story by  
ADAM EDWARDS

The true meaning of Christmas is different for everyone. For some it's the time of year to gather together with family and friends. For others it's a religious holiday. But what is it really?

Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus. The exact date of his birth is unknown. For awhile it was celebrated on January 6. Pope Julius I fixed the date to December 25.

The idea of decorating, having large feasts, and putting up a tree for Christmas came from pagan festivals long ago.

St. Nicholas, or Santa Claus, came from Belgium, England, Germany, and Holland. He was a saint. The holiday which celebrates his life is St. Nicholas Day, December 6. We adapted it and called him Santa Claus.

Here is the way some students here celebrate.

Kim Carpenter said, "Every other year we drive down to Pensacola, Florida to visit relatives. On Christmas Day we go to the beach."

Christy Belfiglio, says, "On Christmas Eve we light a candle and pass it around saying what we

## St. Nick's Secrets, Help Parents Hide Truth

Story by  
JOANN CROGHAN

It is odd that parents always tell kids not to lie, especially when they would do anything to keep the truth of the Santa Claus a secret.

Senior Renee Dunn tells her special memory of Santa. "One Christmas Day, when I was little, my whole family and I went to church," she said. "When we came home we realized Santa came with our presents. I still don't know to this day who put them there."

Many students said that when they were little their neighbor or father would dress up like Santa Claus to amuse them. This shows that parents would go to any length to keep Santa's secret.

Even faculty had stories to share. Journalism teacher Mr. Jeff Kuchno has a Christmas memory. "My dad used to ring the doorbell and say, 'Ho Ho Ho Merry Christmas.' We'd get out of bed and run to see Santa, but all we saw was dad looking at the sky saying, 'Goodbye Santa,'" said Mr. Kuchno.

Guidance counselor Mrs. Connie Clay said, "When we were

little my father drove us around, trying to find Santa flying in the sky. He would point to a star or planet and say, 'That's him.' But while we were gone, mom put out the presents, and we thought Santa had come. It got to the point that we didn't want to look for Santa any more because he always came when we were gone."

Some parents even like to get a laugh around Christmas time. At senior Christie Masters' house, they had to rub their noses on the spot in their living room where they wanted their presents.

Although many parents tried to keep Santa's non-existence a secret, some parents spoiled it.

Senior Lindsay Middendorf said, "One year Santa brought me a really cool purple bike. But then my mom said, 'Do you like it, it's the only one we could find.' I said, 'Are you Santa?'"

Some parents did accidentally spoil the secret about Santa, but it is a lot of fun to make-believe for this one time of year. It's fun to think that Santa exists and that he eats those milk and cookies and not your father.

## Coping With Death: Loved Ones Tell How

Story by  
MELANIE HILL

Holidays. They can be your best times; they can be your worst times," said guidance counselor Mrs. Darlene Oliva.

Even if a loved one died in March, the holidays are the hardest to go through.

Christmas is a time for giving. Finding something a loved one would like, but when you can't give it to them it is even harder to cope with.

If this happening to you, don't fret. This happens often; your feelings are normal. You need to discuss your feelings with the rest of your family or people who would understand. Sometimes talking or writing to the loved one who died is helpful, said guidance counselor Mrs. Nancy Higgins.

Sophomore Leah Kaimann lost someone who was very close to her...her mother. Leah goes to a support group at Missouri Baptist to help her cope because she needs to talk to others, she said. "If you keep it bottled up inside, one day you'll just explode and not want to do anything," she said.

Guidance counselor Mrs. Linda Ponath lost her husband six years ago around this time. "I gathered strength from other people's support. I don't remember what they said or what they did; I just remember that they supported me," said Mrs. Ponath. Her friends kept her busy and tried to keep her mind off of her loss. They taught her how to do household chores

her husband normally did. "Their presence gave me support and courage," she said.

Losing grandparents can be hard, but when you live with them and they help raise you, it can be even worse. Junior Todd Roe knows how this feels. His grandmother died in May from cancer. As she was dying, he tried to keep her as happy as he could. It was very hard to accept, and he had problems accepting it until she was gone. Then it hit. He never used to pray. Now that she is gone, he says, he prays every night to somehow keep in touch with her.

In a December, 1997 article in the "Ladies Home Journal," one couple told about how they lost their son Ben. After his death, the mother mainly dreaded the holidays. She pretended to be happy for her husband and for the rest of the children. But since they didn't talk about Ben's death, they were still hurting inside.

Finally ten years after their son's death, the couple decided to make Christmas a more joyous event. The first thing they did was working on finding pleasure in the holidays by not making everything such a chore. They advise others to let their senses work again, so they can see the lights, hear the carols, and smell the trees.

The second thing they did was they brought out things their son had made for Christmas, and they set them up. Whenever Ben came to mind, they didn't hold back. They talked about him and their feelings. They said this was another way to deal with their grief.

The last thing they tried to do was find one special thing to commemorate how much they missed him. They went to a Christmas service over the holidays which was designed especially to remember missed loved ones. They sang carols like "I miss you most at Christmas time." They said that this helped bring new meaning and joy to their Christmas holidays.

Life is all about choices. You can either choose to be in a bad mood because a loved one is gone. Or you can make the choice to remember all of the special memories you have of that special someone, said Mrs. Ponath.

Leah added, "You never know who you lost or how important they are to you until they are gone."



# Happy

Edited by  
DOUG CARR

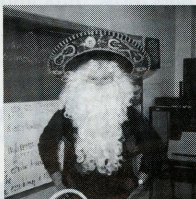
## St. Nicholas Under Cover

**C**hristmas is coming and Santa seems to be everywhere. Not only is he in the malls, but he has also visited the halls of West. Try to identify these employees behind the beard.

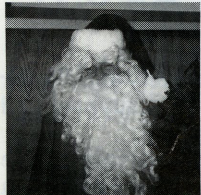


This Santa is "a senior" and will "graduate" with the Class of '98.

This Santa's favorite saying is "Ho Ho Ho, ¡ Feliz Navidad!"



This is one of the tallest Santas in the building.



This Santa left the classroom to help students in the office.

"Extra, Extra! Read all about it!" says this Santa.



This Santa can decompose fruitcake and tell you what it is really made of.



"Ho, Ho, Ho. Focus on the holidays," says this Santa.



Photos by DAVE McGRAIL

Solutions:

Jeff Kuchno  
(1) Mrs. Kathy Epperly (2) Mr. Brian Joye (3) Mr. Steve Jurkins (4) Mrs. Sue Smith (5) Mrs. Connie Clay (6) Mrs. Sharon Brandt (7) Mr.

## New, Old Holiday Traditions Celebrated

**C**hristmas lights, sleigh bells, and gifts are familiar traditions of this holiday. Families gather in homes with relatives to celebrate their reasons for the season.

For students of the English as a Second Language class, celebrations differ from the common American traditions.

Freshman Vladimir Kholostov came from Russia five years ago. He said Russians celebrate Christmas very similar to the way most here do. Along with Santa Claus, his daughter, Snowgirl, helps in the delivery of gifts. The season's festivities usually last two to three weeks, a positive difference compared to our one official day.

Jabran Khan, an eighth grader, will celebrate his second year here in St. Louis. A Muslim from Pakistan, he enjoys a holiday totally separate from the Christian holiday of Christmas. In February, Muslims have a fast called Eades after a month long fast during January. On this day, they go to the mosque, receive new clothes, and get money. They remember the hunger and suffering of years past. Back home they would sacrifice a calf and gather with family. This year will be different however. The calf will have to be substituted

with store bought meat and Jabran's family will celebrate with-out many members left in Pakistan.

The season also differs greatly for freshman Phatcharin Wanna. In her home country of Thailand, New Year's is the big holiday during this time. At this time, they celebrate with parties, giving of money, and visiting the Buddhist temple. Another difference is the people involved with the festivities. Phatcharin said, "Everyone celebrates here; there it's just the Buddhist community."

Senior Tushar Bhakta and brothers senior Samir and eighth grader Jigar Vazir, are all from India. In October, they celebrate Dipawli. This holiday is marked with a 21-day vacation from school. Unfortunately, they were not able to take such a leave of absence this year from West. Nevertheless, the holiday was remembered despite their change of address. On New Year's Day, they gather in homes to participate in traditional activities such as eating, sand painting, and fireworks.

Although some of these students have traveled halfway across the world, the enormous distance has not torn their homeland from their hearts. Despite necessary adjustments, they continue to celebrate the season according to their different beliefs and customs.

## Winter Vacation Equals Work For Athletes

**T**he holidays are supposed to be a time to relax, a time to spend with your family, and most of all, a time to stuff your face.

But for the high school athlete, when winter vacation comes around, it's time to work. Nearly every varsity sport has some type of competition during winter vacation, and most have practice at least a few times a week.

The Varsity Girls Basketball team has a Christmas Tournament at Aquinas-Mercy from December 22-26, with only Christmas Day

off the court.

The wrestling team is hosting a varsity tournament tomorrow at 10 a.m. followed by a week of practices. And worst of all, the guys have to watch what they eat and make sure they stay in their weight class.

"It's frustrating to watch what you eat," said senior Dallas Delaney. "The team expects us to be at our weight so we can win as much as possible."

Although the swim team doesn't have as strict eating rules as the wrestling team does, they still have to stay away from certain foods to help them stay in shape.

## 'Twas The Night

Story by  
JOSH RENAUD

'Twas the night before Christmas at Hazelwood West; Forgotten by students was all their school stress, The T.P. that hung from the tree limbs with care, And the never-consistent conditioning of air; My brothers were nestled all snug in their beds, While visions of goody-bags danced in their heads; My folks in their Levis, and I in my Gap, Had settled our brains for a Christmas-break nap; When out on the lawn, there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter; Away to the window I ran like in track, Tore open the shutters and threw out my back; The moon on the breast of the plowed, blackened snow Gave the luster of midnight to objects below; When, what to my wondering sight should appear, But the drawers that I lost T.P.ing last year! With spirit spray paint and bumpers a-draggin', I recognized that ole "Weggie Wagon," More rapid than eagles a line of cars came, The drivers whistled, shouted and called out by name, "Now freshmen! Now sophomores! Now, listen, beware: We're coming to steal your holiday underwear! To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall! Now drive away! Drive away! Drive away all!" Like missiles, the T.P. was launched to the sky, By students in car-seats as they drove by; Up to the house-top, the streamers they flew, And stuck to the shingles with wet-snowflake glue; Then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof The landing of reindeer, quite heavy a-hoof; As I pulled in my head and turned right around, Down through the chimney I heard a strange sound; It was Santa! He was coming! Or so it would seem; He emerged from the fireplace, doused in shaving cream; His crimson fur suit and accompanying foam Were dripping and dropping all over my home; His eyes — how they burned! His dimples inflamed! His cheeks were so rosy, his nose was the same! His droll little mouth was bent down in a frown, As he asked "What's all this clowning around?" "Oh, Santa! Oh, sir!" My reply sounded meek, "It's Christmas! It's B-ball! It's a new Spirit Week!" The old elf, he nodded, and explained with a sigh, "I understand. I'm a West alumni!" A wink of his eye and a twist of his head Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread; He spoke not a word, but continued his work, Filled up the stockings, then turned with a jerk; Wiping the shaving cream from the side of his nose, And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose; He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a cheer, And away flew all his T.P.ed reindeer; But I heard him exclaim, as he drove out of sight, "Merry Christmas to West! And fight, fight, fight, fight!"

## You Shouldn't Have

**I**t's Christmas morning, and you eagerly tear the paper from Uncle Bill's gift. You open the box, and it stares you in the face. But what it is, you are not quite sure. You thank your uncle while trying to decide whether to try it on or plug it in.

The tradition of giving gifts allows special memories to form. Some memories are of special presents with deep meanings, while others are of just weird gifts.

**Check out these gifts:**  
**Naughty or nice?** Sophomore Zach Cordes opened a gift from his uncle a couple of years ago and

## Some Gifts Will Never Be Forgotten

found a lump of coal.  
**The Great Pumpkin arrives.** "It looked like a Halloween costume," said junior Laura Wisdom when describing a shirt she received from her aunt. Laura actually did wear it one year for Halloween.  
**Sneakers smell like a skunk?** Senior Brett Scarfino's Dad gave him an Israeli gas mask when he was young. The mask found its way to a garage sale several years later.  
**On the serious side:**

**Surprise!** Senior Andrew Gustin remembers being surprised when he was ten with a bicycle. He said the gift was special because he did not think it was feasible for his family, making the bike a surprise.  
**Go Blues!** Junior Laura Wisdom appreciated a Blue's jersey she received. "It gave me a way to show my spirit when they win."  
**Priceless.** Freshman Portia Lane treasures her mom's necklace, which is special to her because her mother died when she was young.



**SANTA KNOWS...** Sophomore Zach Cordes and freshman Portia Lane show off their Christmas gifts. Photo by JASON MYERS

This Christmas, you might be surprised with a sentimental keepsake, or something unusual could make a lasting impression. Just remember the spirit of the season. Some gifts are to be treasured. As for the others, keep in mind that it's the thought that counts.

**Tight 'n Trippy**

Story by  
JO ANN CROGHAN

**Totally Tacky**

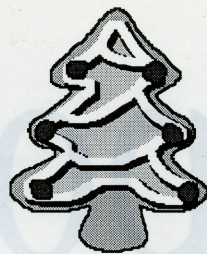
Getting out for two weeks.  
The loving and giving feeling most people have at Christmas time.  
Looking at all of the wonderful displays of Christmas lights.  
Santa Claus coming and giving everyone presents.  
Seeing family that you haven't seen in a long time.  
A White Christmas.

Coming back with honor papers due.  
Those who admire Scrooge.  
Christmas lights shining in your window keeping you awake the whole night.  
The Grinch taking those presents away.  
Missing those who cannot be with you.  
Your father passing you the shovel.



# Holidays

Edited by  
Stephanie Clarkin



To Varsity, Y'all are great. And I'm really happy that we got a chance to know each other a little better. And to O.J., Sexy, Magic Shell, Wiggles, Fatty, and My Little Pom Pom, you're great. I love y'all! Gump

Merry Christmas to the Princesses and PPPP's. We'll always be pretty pretty! Mmm...Chicken! Also to all the Flygirls...well, the two of you! I love you all very much! ♥ Princess Shara Lyn P.S. Braille?

To Teba & Krinzy, Happy Holidays! Have fun this Christmas! Love, The Apocalypse

To Jamie, Bre, & Second Hour Girls Choir, Have fun over the holiday & get me something cool for Christmas. Kelly Dennis

Merry Christmas to the people who have made this year worth living! Nicky Guthrie, Casey Dikkers, Lindsay Hansard, Melanie Fink, and my sweetie, Jeff Purgahn, and all the moose! Eva Romano

To Columbia, & Frankie, La Lalalala Bang Movie 18 Smurfs 0. Janet

Eric, Guess what my car is better and I love you more and oh I win. 01-11-97. Love, Angie

DJ Henrichs, Merry Christmas babe and don't play in traffic! Nicole Zamudio

To all my CS buddies-Patti, Pam, Gail, Susan, Greg, Jeanne, Gerri, and more. Love, Phil

To Shara-Lyn Puckett, Stephanie Garven, Anna Gambill, & Courtney Williams, (The Parkwood FlyGirls) as well as Jon Hamilton (one of the FlyGuys), Hope your Christmas brings you much joy. In the midst of receiving gifts, just don't forget that Christmas is about Jesus. Derek

Merry Christmas Carrie, Stacey, Carol, & Chris, Have a happy new year. Patricia Sander

To Christy Tayloe, You're the most awesome person in the world. To Danielle, I hope you have an awesome Christmas. To Levon, I hope your leg gets better soon. To the Varsity and JV hockey players, Good luck. Just a girl

To Patricia, Chris, Andrea, Ryan, and everyone else, Merry Christmas. Enjoy a good year in 98! Love, Stacey

To all my PPB's, Have a Merry Christmas and maybe this year you'll all get hooouses! Bread-Peanut Butter-Jelly forever. Love, Gerty and her Otis

To Monica Loggins, Ryan Slawski, and all band members, Look down and smile! From, ??

Braille. Braille? Braille! Merry X-mas to the Supermodel Club, Frankie, my breakfast bunch, and Meanie Face. Braille-fully yours, Double-O-Billy

Dear Mujuber & Sirajul, El Señor Hansomé, and Phattie, Keep it real, feel da flo. If a chump steps up, throw a bo. El Señor Suave

Mmm Kitten, Merry Christmas to all of the lovely PPP's, from the only PPPPP. Happy Holidays to Feminina, YRH, YRS, Katie, and all my Double -O-buddies. You better work! Love, Diva

Merry Christmas to my dinner pals, the sexy six, pumpkin, and the 2nd place state champs. I love you all! Tracy (Monkey)

Sara, Thanx for helping me through all my problems this year. Sorry for not being there when I was needed. I love ya. Your little Sis

I would like to encourage my extremely gifted musician friends to stick with it. Jeremy, you're hard core. S.O.D.J.

My lil sis Lauren, You're the best lil sis. Hope you have a great X-mas. Love, your big sis, Michelle

To 852786, thinking of you! Merry Christmas Friends! 143, ME!

To The AM Health Occ. (Gals), Ho Ho Ho, have a great Christmas & always remember "Jackie In The Rax" & never forget teachers getting up in your face! I love you forever & always! Jenny Maclaine

Hey Jessicah, How about you and me at my house? Happy holidays to the Class of '99 and all the other crazy people. Stephens

To all of my good friends, Happy holidays and enjoy your Christmas break! Becky Capstick

A big Anti-S.S.S. Yuletide yodel to my bro, John, Steve, Popper, Scott, Doug, Kristy, Christy, Gina, Jason, Kim, Michelle, Tammy, Tim, Gretchen, Kelly, Andy, and Nancy. From Josh

Merry Christmas to all the cheerleaders-SECOND PLACE BABY! And to Lisa, Newt, Katie, Mandy, and Tracy. Monkey-eat pumpkin pie on Christmas, it's a Thursday. Tigers still go Grrr. Masters

Nay-Nay, I hope you're happy that you finally got to write a Blues story in this issue. Love Ya, Chris

DeDe, Gerty, KO, & all of the PPB's and even the jellies too Merry Christmas & always remember bread—peanut butter—Jelly—can't wait till we unite once again. ♥ Jo Jo P.S. You don't have a hooouse.

To Rob, I hope our first Christmas together is special and the new year brings many good things for us. Love, Katrina

To Ricky, Merry Christmas! I hope we have a great New Year together. I love you always, Katy

Merry Christmas to OotBix, Gidget, Pooky, Kimmy, Jo Jo, Rachel, Quart-of-whye, Yukey, Kelly, & Val-Val, 'Cause we're smooth like peanut butter & sweet like jam! ♥ Spoony.

Merry Christmas to all my girls, PPP's, and PPPP's, I love you all. To Darryl, the greatest... And to the Rach, Hey ALLEYOOPA! And always remember mmm chicken, tasty, tasty meat ♥ ya, Princess Jennifer.

To all the Varisty Cheerleaders, I hope you all have a great Christmas. This has been an awesome year that will never be forgotten. Merry Christmas to my lil sisters! Love ya all! Love, Barbi "Fatty"

Merry Christmas, Big Sis. Luv you lots! From, Elisabeth.

K.K., I'll never forget you. Merry Christmas. Ohbulz.

Tanya, Hey Dork! We love ya. Merry Christmas. From, Katy and Mandy.

To all of my friends, we have had some great times. I'll miss all of you after you're gone. Merry Christmas. And stay close always. Amy Presley.

Sue, Merry Christmas :) Thanks for being there for me this whole past year. Mindy Harmon.

Pat, Guess what? I do more! Ha Ha! I've got it on paper! Love, Danielle.

All Pommies & Jenny (Lil Sis), You're a real sweet-♥. Have a super Christmas vacation. I love all you guys. Competition rocked. I know state will too! We're a great squad! Becky.

To the Class of 99, I love you all. Remember life is too short to be unhappy. So live life to the fullest. (Seize the Day.) Your class President, Lisa Koz #11.

To Mrs. Beth Ann Meyer, It's been a great first semester with you! I hope we make you proud at clinics! We love you & Merry Christmas. ♥, your five AM girls!

Ben, Merry Christmas! I love you very much! You mean the world to me! Frog.

Stacy Hanneken, I just wanted to say Merry Christmas and I love you. Jimmy Hargrove.

Mrs. Meyer, Happy Christmas & a Merry New Year! Thanks for everything you've taught us. We really appreciate it. Love ya always, PM Health Occ.

To Kare-Bear & Pisa, Thanks for being there for me when I needed it the most. The place people got to stick together. ♥, Gina Bina

Christia, I wish you luck, and I'll miss you baby. Dorothy.

Porky, I'll always be watching you from afar. Maybe it'll be closer someday. I sure hope so. Love, your secret admirer

Patrick, Don't worry, this X-mas will be as much fun as it was last year!!! Amanda

Christia, I'm going to miss you when you're gone. Don't forget me and call me! Love, ♥Beth

To all my pale-faced, bolonga-smelling Brailards Jenny & Rachel... "The Greatest." Merry Kwanzaa and a Happy New Hanukkah. Mmm... Braille. "From Brown Cow"

To Hoagie, Jen-Lee, Con-leeton, Saito-my Pridette friends, puts sports buds like Lewis, Whitmore, Rosenbloom, Root, Kohler, & the freshman but of course Becky, Megan, Shelley, Aril, Kayla, & Katie. I love ya & have a Merry Christmas. Becky Moore

To Chris, Miss, Teeny, Trac, & all my other girls, I hope ya'll have a happy holidays & think of me in '98 when the Blues win the Stanley Cup. Love ya, Nay-Nay

Dear Pridettes, This has been a great year. Merry Christmas! We luv you! Fruit salads! Love the Sophomores: Hoagie, Melanie, JenLee, & ConLeeTon

Dear Shara Lynn, I just wanted to tell you Merry Christmas! You are my best friend in the whole wide world & I you so much! We've been through a lot together & I hope we stay in touch next year! ♥Kimmy

Merry Christmas JenLee, Saito, Amy, Tedd, Becky, Megan, Zach, Pat, ConLeeTon, Rachel, Brad, Kim, Jan, Nathan, April, Shelley, Malissa, Melissa J., Julie, Kwaj, & everybody else. Love always, Hoagie

To the "Group," Merry Christmas. We'll miss you all next year. Don't forget we love you lots. Love Tigger & Piglet

Merry X-Mas to the Fab-4, Fatty, & second place champs, Cappucino, B.J., & the Coffee Den clique! Happy New Year! Jessy Newton.

To Amanda Hendrix, Being with you fills my holidays with happiness. Love Patrick Jones

To: Chantel Fuqua, Happy Holiday's from Li'l Sis. Love ya!!

Squeegie Man will triumph again! Jax Man

Merry Christmas & a happy 2 weeks of freedom from one tired student to all the others. Jeff Batchelor

To Jay, Happy Holidays Babe. Love Jenifer Gannon

To Greg Ottinger, What's up Lil boy! Jason Bower

Merry Christmas to the junior class of '99. Even though we know we're best, we still have to show everyone else. Tanishia Palmer

Foxie, Just remember your Christmas present, one red bow coming up! Merry Christmas. Love, your Big Sis chicken."

Dara, merry Christmas & Nikki & Jill & Melissa have a great time off school. Amanda

Have the best Christmas get lots of presents! Don't forget to sleep late!! Kristen Brown

To the Fellas on the Senior Rail, Looking good! Merry Christmas. ♥ Secret Senior Lady Admirer

To the guys and gals of 1998, Well, this is OUR year! Let's make it the best! Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Love, Jackie AKA PMS

Wil Marys AKA Ziggy, Merry Christmas & a happy new year. Have a lot of fun. LYLAS, Peaches

To Jason Bower, Hope to see you under the mistletoe! Your Secret Admirer

I want to tell my best friend Kim, Merry Christmas & that I'm glad we're best friends. Melissa Brevington

Merry Christmas Dina, I love you & have a great two weeks off. Love, Dara

To the Lunch Bunch, Merry Christmas & Don't kill anybody if I'm not there! Niki "Babydoll" Hand

To all of our wonderful office ladies at Hazelwood West, thanks so much for everything you do. Have a wonderful holiday season!! Merry Xmas. Steve, Blaine, Larry, Jackie, Jerry, Bob, Frank, Denny

Merry Christmas to Natalie Ben Alison Becky, Gina, Karen, Joe, Josh, Dan, melanie, Stephanie, Kathy, Dave, Chris, Lindsay, Kelly, & Theresa. Have lots fun over the break & keep in touch. Angela Nord

To Katy Meyer, Merry Christmas! I love You! Love, Ricky

Kelly, I'm glad we are best friends, I'll always remember the great times we've shared. Merry Christmas to the nurses, my all-time basketball partner, Lisa, the Apocalypse, & all my other gal pals! Love always, Lindsay

Bobby, Susan, Missy, Renee, and Tina, This is our Senior year and our first (Bobby) and last X-Mas we have together. I hope our relationship(s) lasts. I love you all. Even if Tina leaves us to go to Cali. I will miss you Tina. Tracie Ross

To Lisa Wittke and the Apocalypse Supreme Being, Merry Christmas. I love you guys. To the Class of "98" SENIORS RULE! Kelly Coffer

Princesses, PPP are you with me - Oh Yeah! I love all you gals because you're so pretty. Love, Princess Cathie

Ju-Ju, Boodie, & Louie, You guys are the greatest. I ♥ ya! Love ya, #12

Merry Braille to all the Pretty Pretty Princesses, the Supermodels and to Anthony, Mike, Vince, Daryl, Chris, and Cam. I hope you all get what you Brailled for! Love, Princess Rachel

Jim, I love working in the same school with you. Connie Clay

Kwissy, Happy X-Mas. Don't have too much fun on break! Love, Andrea

Brittani, Hey Honey! Happy Holidays! Hopefully we'll have fun over our break ! I know we will. Love Beth

Dear Twin, Beef Cake, Red, Dino, El Señor Suave, El Señor Handsome, Mujiber, & Sirajul, you are all crazy. Have a nice Christmas & I hope you get a lot of socks. Keep it real. Phattie

Andwea, Happy holidays! Just remember, we never have too much fun! Love ya! From Kwissy

To all our gals, Hey all you little babies! Get your licenses! Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays! Love you all, Kimmy Becky and LN Lewis

To everybody at Hazelwood West, Happy Holidays. Christia Stevens

Lauren, Have a Merry Christmas. Julie

Aubrie Klaas & Heather Riggs, Have a very merry Christmas girls! We'll always remember November 25. Love ya lots ! BFF Taste the Rainbow! Karen Hayne

To Jenny, Jackie, Delise & Katrina, my favorite Heath Occupation Gals, hope you all have a great Christmas. Love, Katy

Merry Christmas to all! Charles Crump

Merry Christmas to all my playas & playettes in this school. I hope yall get everything yall asked for & make my Christmas merry by stop playa hating. Dan Williams

Happy holidays Hoagie, Brad, Amy, Melanie, LN, Mego, Sara, Becky, Chadler, Kimbo, Katie, Jan-ifer, Nate, Kim, Pat Zach, April, Shelly, & all the Pridettes. I ♥ U Guys! Love, Jen-Lee

Um yeah Crynzie, Don't forget to cwean between da cwacks. I love you lots. Merry Christmas? Teba

To all my friends, the Pridettes & my li'l sis Katy I. Have a great Christmas! Take care over the holidays! I love ya all! MandyB

Brandon, hey look what I brought! I do more. Ha, ha. I got it in writing, so I'm right. Love, Pam

To all my Princesses, I love you girls, and have a very Merry Christmas! Stay pretty! Love, PPP Jamie

Mrs. Boyette, have a merry wedding and a happy new year. Love your friend, Andrea Taylor

Angela, Merry Christmas! Thanks for always being there! Natalie

Senior Pridettes, thanks for making us feel welcome. You've been great & we'll miss you SO MUCH next year. Don't forget us. Have a great holiday! Love always, your fishies

Christopher, Hey sweet (heart). I love you very much and I hope you have a very good X-mas. Love from my heart, Heather Riggs

Big Dog, Hello, hey you mean a lot to me! Hi Ray! Have a good X-mas hairy neck. (Nice Pants.) Your best bud

Isabelle, Da da da! Madeleine

To the "group," Have fun this Christmas. We'll party long and hard over break. To Piglet and Tigger, have fun in the

Hundred Acre Woods during Christmas. Love always to all, Pooh Bear

Becky, Angie, & Katie, Hey Girls! Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stephanie Clarkin

Dearest Sister of mine (Booner), Merriest of holiday wishes to you! May your vacation be wonderful and warm. I ♥ you Dara! Dina Starr

I love you bunches! From, Fuzzy Bear

Dwight Datton, you brought the true meaning of good friends. There have been many Christmas times shared our first one together as kids made our friendship even stronger. Love, Smyley.

Hey Yukiko! Merry Christmas. Sorry to put you through all of my wackiness. Hope you have been having fun. Love, your big sis

Jerry!! Quick, move the cooler. Jiggle, jiggle, jiggle! Ha! Ha!...that's not funny. Stop that man Charles, he's...never mind. Love, Cuz. Merry Christmas

To Gretchen, JoAnn, Courtney, Kristen, Yukiko, and Dallas. Let's have a great vacation. When's the slumber party. Sorry Dallas. You can come but not all night. Plain Peanut Butter ♥Kelly

To all the Varsity Girls Basketball Team, Let's have a great tournament and have a lot of fun. Good luck. To the JV team, have a great vacation and come back ready to work. Merry Christmas. #30 Kelly O'Heron

To Fungus corn & Calisus, Merry Christmas. Hi He-Man & Bu-bu. Todo esta bien. Love Bob

To 410, Even though we don't talk anymore, Merry Christmas anyway! (and a Happy New Year!) 658

To the Original Boys, Hope you have a wonderful holiday. From the Gals

Merry Christmas to Marschnee, Short-E, Tiff, Tori, Neetra, T-Lee, Lando, Deno, Icy, D. Walls, Skeeter, Kim, Pam, Jaime, Cedric, Marcus, Elvin, Chris, Skyler, Michael, Ant, Lil Chris, Big Jas, J-Dog, & all my Pink People. ♥ Kwajelyn

To the cast of "Take Five," have a great Christmas holiday. From Adam & Darlene

To the Fall Gazette staff, You've been great! Thanks for working so hard and being so much fun. Mrs. S



**MERRY CHRISTMAS...**from the Fall Gazette staff! (FRONT) Features editor Dave McGrail, News editor Dina Starr, Managing editor Doug Carr, Assistant editor Stephanie Clarkin, Opinions editor Josh Renard, Sports editor Chris DeGroat, (SECOND ROW) Becky Dall, Adam Edwards, Shonta Reid, Renee Baker, Kwajelyn Jackson, (BACK) D.J. Henrichs, Kelly O'Heron, Shannon McLaughlin, Circulation editor JoAnn Croghan, and Melanie Hill.



Edited by  
CHRIS DeGROAT

## Slopes Set To Open Tomorrow

Story by  
CHRIS DeGROAT

For some all snow means is another day off school. To others it means bad roads and more traffic on the way to work. But yet to some it means risking all the bones in their body as they rush down a ski slope, and they love it.

Though Hidden Valley is the only place in the area to snowboard, it is a popular sport to students in the area. It won't be long before a layer of snow is ready to be torn up. The plan is to open the slopes December 20.

"It's the one thing that I look forward to every year," said junior Joe Logue, "even though it's only here for a short period of time."

Snowboarding is a fast growing sport that would probably be expanding faster if it were not for the costs. The cost of all the equipment and the special clothing can cost more than \$1000.

"If you have your heart set to it then it's worth the money," said senior Natalie Karn.

Boarding for many people is a way to stay in the outdoors during the winter. The rush from flying down the hills takes your mind off how cold it actually is. The only cold thing about it is the rides on the lifts, when you can't help noticing the strong winds blowing on your face.

"It takes me different places," said senior Dan Hough, "and it keeps me active in the wintertime." He has boarded at many resorts in Colorado in past winters, and has been snowboarding for four years.

At one time the slopes were ruled by the skiers, but now the sounds of a snowboard tearing up the snow behind a skier is a sign to get out of the way.

## West's Girls Take Second At State

Story by  
CHRIS DeGROAT

After a last place finish in regionals, the Varsity Cheerleaders worked hard and finished in second place at state with only seven practices to prepare for the competition.

For the first time ever, a single extension was performed in a Missouri competition.

Senior Jessi Schrader held up senior Jessy Newton with her arms fully extended. Then she did a 360, followed by walking forward about five feet.

"I'm proud of the squad and that we accomplished that stunt," said Jessi. She also said that her job was easy because Newton stayed stiff while she lifted her.

"We had the attitude to go out and win, and I think it's because of that we got second place," said senior Christie Masters. If it had

not been for the extra hand springs in the Pattonville's routine, the Varsity Cheerleaders could have taken first.

Since they didn't have much time to prepare, and an extremely bad practice before the routine, the girls thought they'd go shopping for good luck.

Before the girls did their routine, they had a squad prayer, the first time any of the this year's squad had ever done that before a performance.

"The judges were smiling at us and nodding their heads when we were doing our routine, so we knew we were doing good," said Christie. The squad felt it

was the best they have ever performed.

When the girls returned after the weekend at Mizzou, they held their heads high. They had a great routine and had proved they were one of the best in the state.



STANDING TALL...Senior Jenny Krings looks on as junior Amy Woods is lifted into a torch. Photo by JASON MYERS

## Underclassman Step Up

Story by  
D.J. HENRICH

The Varsity Wrestling team will be missing some experience this year with only two seniors participating.

This leaves the underclassmen to represent West as our all star grapplers. Hopefully they will rise to the challenge as they always do.

Of course the wrestlers aren't the only ones with their work cut

out for them. Coach Hardy has the task of training this group into young warriors and has pulled out some new methods to make up for the lost experience.

He stated before the opening of the season "I think it will be baptism by fire."

The varsity guys had a bad start to the season with a 50-24 loss to Ritenour. Although looking for this extra help is nothing compared to the many hours of practicing, running, drilling, sweating and even vomiting, the team still has much work to do before the end of the season.

## Promising Youth Plan Great Season

Story by  
KELLY O'HERON

It's 8 a.m. on a Saturday, and there is a pride of Wildcats practicing in the gym.

The varsity boys basketball team is planning on having a great season.

With losing only one senior last year, the team is in good shape. The team is still very young though having only three seniors: Elvin Slaughter, LeVon Davis, and Terrance Lee. "We are young but we have a year of varsity experience under our belts," said Coach Jim Ryan.

Teamwork is the main element for the Wildcats this season. "We can be successful if we work as a team, plus we have a great coach," said junior Dan Wendt, who was athlete of the week on Channel 2 and was featured on the news on December 5.

The season got off to a great start against Aquinas Mercy. The

## The Blues Come Marching In... Fans Expect Cup in 1998

Story by  
RENEE BAKER

The St. Louis Blues started the season with the best record in the history of their organization, 7-0-1.

What has contributed to their success? This is their first complete season with new coach Joel Quenneville. Many fans believe this may be one reason for their good start.

Senior Belinda Mackiewicz puts it into perspective simply by saying, "I didn't like (Mike) Keenan." This is the way many fans look at it. Without Keenan the Blues could possibly bring the Stanley Cup to St. Louis.

The players also seemed to embrace the change of coaches with an optimistic outlook. Much of the Blues' lack of success in the

past few years was even blamed on Keenan by some of the big name players on the team such as Brett Hull.

Some of this year's success can be attributed to the new coaching staff, but the players are the ones winning it for them. The biggest scare of this year was the same as it's been every year, the possible trading of Brett Hull.

Senior Kristie Back said, "Hull needs to be re-signed because the Blues would not be the same without him." Hull's contract expires after this season and the question of whether he will sign with the Blues again is still out there.

In their 31st year in the NHL, everyone is looking forward to a successful season. Senior Christy Zangrilli said, "The way they're going, they're sure to win the Cup."

## Lady Hoopsters Struggle To Win

Story by  
SHANNON McLAUGHLIN

This year's Girls Varsity Basketball Team is hoping not to have another 3-22 season. All of the players plan on working hard every practice and game.

"We can't do any worse than last year. We will work much harder. We need to stay in shape for this long season. I think we need to run a lot," said senior Stacy Hanneken.

The team worked very hard to come together as a team before the season opener against, what was thought to be an evenly matched Aquinas Mercy. West lost 49-29.

Senior Lindsay Middendorf said, "The team will do much better. We will practice shooting and passing drills. We will be more dedicated this year."

There are seven new varsity players this season, and five return-

ing. Last season a lot of negative things were said between teammates. Nothing positive came out of last year, but the players and coaches want to change this.

Senior Kelly O'Heron said, "We lacked leadership last year. We were not a unified team. There were too many players who played as individuals. The team will be different this year. We will do well, but it will take some hard work."

Sophomore Becky Moore said, "This year we will do better. The coaches are really working us hard, which is something we need. Both coaches and players really want to win."

## Varsity Hockey Season Hits Rough Spots

Story by  
SHANNON McLAUGHLIN

After winning their first game of the season against

Mehlville, the Varsity Hockey Team had been struggling to get a win. Then, on December 8, they beat McCluer North 1-0 to make the varsity record 2-5.

Senior Nick Johnson said, "We need to keep our heads up. When we start losing, everyone gives up. If we play hard and give 110 percent we will finish above .500."

Johnson and senior Terry Brennen are the only two players who have played for all four years the team has existed.

"The difference is big. It is a different game. The skill is better, much bigger players, the game is faster," said sophomore Taylor Perkins about his first year on varsity. He scored his first hat trick in a JV game against Granite City which the 'Cats won 8-0, to improve the JV record to 3-1.

Things are looking good for the JV team this season. Captain freshman Nick Leavy said, "We need to work on passing and hitting more. A big thing we need is confidence. If we have that, we will do fine."

## Guys Get Off To A Good Start

### Aquacats Beat Fort Zumwalt South To Begin Season

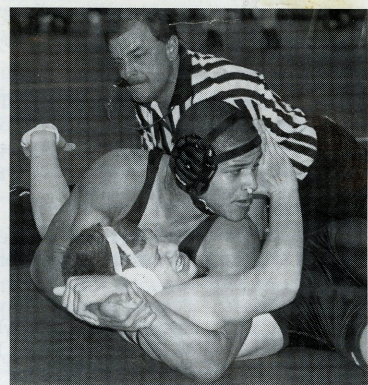
Story by  
RENEE BAKER

The Varsity Swim Team started their season with a victory over Fort Zumwalt North. Many swimmers reached equal or better time than the ones they had set last year.

"It was a very good start to a very good season," said Coach Helen Buss

Coach Buss is looking forward to a strong year. There are some possibilities to make state. Junior Dan Syzman was only three seconds off the state time for freestyle in their first meet, and will likely qualify within the next couple meets.

The guys' next meet is today after school against St. Dominic High where they hope to continue their success.



HOLDING ON FOR THE PIN...Junior Kevin Ford attempts to pin a Central wrestler. Photo by PRESTIGE

## NEXT UP!

### BOYS BASKETBALL

|           |           |               |      |           |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|------|-----------|
| VARSITY   | JAN 6-10  | FONTBONNE     | TBA  | TBA       |
|           |           | TOURNAMENT    |      |           |
| SOPHOMORE | DEC 26-30 | CHAMINADE     | AWAY | TBA       |
|           |           | X-MAS TOURNEY |      |           |
| FRESHMAN  | JAN 5     | ST. CHARLES   | HOME | 4:00 p.m. |

### GIRLS BASKETBALL

|          |           |               |      |           |
|----------|-----------|---------------|------|-----------|
| VARSITY  | DEC 22-26 | AQUINAS M.    | AWAY | TBA       |
|          |           | X-MAS TOURNEY |      |           |
| JV       | JAN 6     | PARKWAY N     | AWAY | 5:30 p.m. |
| FRESHMAN | JAN 5     | ST. CHARLES   | HOME | 4:00 p.m. |

### SWIMMING

|         |        |             |      |           |
|---------|--------|-------------|------|-----------|
| VARSITY | DEC 19 | ST. DOMINIC | HOME | 4:00 p.m. |
|---------|--------|-------------|------|-----------|

### WRESTLING

|          |        |            |      |            |
|----------|--------|------------|------|------------|
| VARSITY  | DEC 20 | HAZ WEST   | HOME | 10:00 a.m. |
|          |        | TOURNAMENT |      |            |
| JV       | JAN 7  | RIVERVIEW  | HOME | 4:00 p.m.  |
| FRESHMAN | JAN 8  | PARKWAY N  | AWAY | 4:00 p.m.  |

### ICE HOCKEY

|         |        |             |        |            |
|---------|--------|-------------|--------|------------|
| VARSITY | DEC 20 | ST. CHAS. W | REC    | 11:15 p.m. |
|         |        |             | PLEX   |            |
| JV      | DEC 27 | HOWELL      | BRENT- | 9:15 p.m.  |
|         |        |             | WOOD   |            |